



Dear superintendents,

I am writing today to tell you about Pennsylvania's preparation for the Race to the Top and to invite your participation in this historic undertaking. Race to the Top is a competitive grant opportunity for states and represents the largest discretionary funding for education reform ever made available by the federal government. The total amount available nationally is \$4.3 billion, with Pennsylvania eligible for up to \$400 million.

President Barack Obama and Education Secretary Arne Duncan have high expectations in return for this unprecedented investment. They expect nothing less than for our schools to build a new foundation for America's continued growth and prosperity; they expect schools to live up to the promise of a high-quality education for every child.

Race to the Top awards are not formula-based grants given out to every state. Instead, President Obama and Secretary Duncan have called for awards to be given to states demonstrating "a coordinated and deep-seated commitment to reform." Competition will be fierce, with only 10 to 12 grants expected in the first round.

The Race to the Top rules call for at least 50 percent of a state's grant to be passed directly through to districts for district- and school-level reforms. This is where you come in. School districts are invited to join in a state's Race to the Top application by committing to implement all or a substantial part of the state's plan and sharing in the 50 percent of the state's grant award that is earmarked for participating districts.

Following this letter, we set forth the conditions for participating districts, including the nature of the reforms in Pennsylvania's Race to the Top plan and the steps necessary to commit to Race to the Top. You will also see a timeline of significant dates leading up to the application deadline on January 19 – **including an initial deadline of December 18 for school district submission of a preliminary letter of intent.**

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In Pennsylvania, we are well-positioned to compete for a share of Race to the Top funds. Like several other states, we began preliminary conversations with education stakeholders in recent months in anticipation of the U.S. Department of Education's issuance of Race to the Top final guidelines on November 12.

Now that those guidelines and the formal application for Race to the Top funds have been released, we must act swiftly and decisively **at all levels of our public school system** to ensure we submit the strongest application possible. Your involvement will be critical to our success.

The Race to the Top competition will give considerable advantage to those states that can demonstrate there is strong support from school districts for implementing reforms at the state and district level. **As the education leader in your community, we will be relying on you to initiate the discussion at the school district level to determine to what extent your district wants to share in the unique opportunities Race to the Top presents.**

A critical and deadline-sensitive part of this process will be determining whether your district wants to join as a "participating district" in Pennsylvania's Race to the Top process. Participating districts must submit a preliminary letter of intent to the Pennsylvania Department of Education **no later than December 18. Formal declaration of participation through execution of a memorandum of understanding will be due by January 13, 2010.**

I am proud of the educational advances we have made in Pennsylvania by working together to create the best possible learning opportunities for all of our children. We have a unique opportunity to accelerate those gains, provided we act quickly and work together. As always, I thank you for your dedication and efforts on behalf of our students and the entire commonwealth.



Gerald L. Zahorchak

What Race to the Top means for Pennsylvania

President Obama and U.S. Education Secretary Duncan have described Race to the Top as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to “reward states that have raised student performance in the past and have the capacity to accelerate achievement gains with innovative reforms.”

In other words, Race to the Top will support states that have made marked student achievement gains and have the potential to not only continue those gains, but also provide a blueprint for the rest of the country to follow. By that measure, Pennsylvania is a prime contender for Race to the Top funds.

The Race to the Top application requires states to document their past success and create comprehensive strategies in four central areas of reform that will drive school improvement and student achievement:

- **Adopting standards and assessments** that prepare students for college and workplace success
- **Implementing data systems** that measure student success and inform instruction
- Creating and supporting **effective teachers and principals** and ensuring equitable distribution
- **Turning around lowest achieving schools**

In addition, Race to the Top requires that states and districts demonstrate that they have the full capacity to implement their proposed reforms – based both on past implementation successes and credible, forward-looking implementation plans. In other words, Pennsylvania’s application will strongly assert that we can and will execute our plans, taking full advantage of your proven ability to get things done and the state infrastructure to support launching and supporting the highest-impact reforms.

Pennsylvania is strongly positioned to win Race to the Top based on our academic progress to date, the distinctive reforms that we already have underway in each of the four reform areas, and our track record of successful reform implementation. Your hard work made this possible – and we will need your continued efforts to build on our successes using Race to the Top funding.

Consider our collective progress to date:

- Pennsylvania has been recognized by the Center for Education Policy, a leading national educational research organization, as the **only** state to see increases in student achievement in elementary, middle and high school from 2002 to 2008.
- Our standards-aligned system links benchmarked state standards with a rigorous curricular framework and fair assessments, and our tiered system of school-based interventions provides supports to all schools and intensive and targeted assistance to the highest-need schools in the state.
- Pennsylvania continues to develop a world-class longitudinal data system to track student performance – a data system that has garnered honors from the Data Quality Campaign.
- Pennsylvania continues to develop and implement a nationally recognized system of high quality early childhood programs.
- We also are setting the standard for meaningful professional development through statewide efforts like the Pennsylvania Inspired Leadership (PIL) Program, as well as local initiatives such as Pittsburgh’s work on improving teacher effectiveness, which has become a national model for collaboration between districts and teachers’ unions.
- We have taken legislative and regulatory steps to ensure the equitable distribution of funds across the state, enacting an historic funding formula for the state’s basic education subsidy.

Pennsylvania’s application for Race to the Top funding will emphasize our recent progress and will articulate our long-range vision for where we want to take our students and schools. Pennsylvania is committed to ensuring that all children in the commonwealth have access to an education that prepares them to be productive citizens and to succeed in a high-skills, globally-competitive, knowledge-based economy.

We know, however, that there is no silver bullet to that end. We know that there are significant barriers, entrenched practices and a status quo mindset to be overcome in many instances. We also believe, however, that there are specific behaviors and practices which, when implemented and aligned in a comprehensive manner, can result in the success of every child.

Our vision is composed of six primary objectives:		
1	Strengthen and expand the standards-aligned system (SAS) and develop data systems capable of supporting reform	<p>Expand the implementation of SAS</p> <p>Build a coherent set of tools and routines for the use of real-time data to inform instruction leveraging the SAS portal, benchmark, and other assessment data and other tools</p> <p>Ensure that local data systems are able to provide relevant, rapid-time data for use in instruction and decision-making</p> <p>Ensure that State data systems can support reforms, including evaluation of teachers, principals, prep programs, and professional development</p>
2	Develop a world-class human capital pipeline for teachers and leaders	Prepare, recruit, place, and induct excellent teachers and leaders with an emphasis on providing excellent teachers and leaders for low-performing schools
3	Develop a robust multi-measure evaluation system	Develop and implement a multi-measure evaluation system for teachers and leaders including approaches for using the system for development, compensation, and tenure decisions
4	Create a coherent approach to professional development	Identify the critical skills and capabilities required for great teachers and leaders to succeed, and develop world-class professional development against these skills
5	Turn around the lowest performing schools	Identify the lowest performing schools and develop and fund a comprehensive and bold plan for improving performance
6	Evaluate programs and identify and spread best practices	Build State capacity to conduct research and evaluation of programs and policy and identify and spread best practices

Now, we must work together – quickly and decisively – to take our achievements to the next level. We must share the common vision that every child has the ability to learn and achieve with the proper tools and support, and that we need to make certain fundamental reforms to make that vision a reality.

At the district level, you will have to make the critical decision about whether your district will participate in Pennsylvania’s Race to the Top program.

The financial benefits to your district

The \$4.35 billion at stake in the Race to the Top Fund represents an unprecedented federal investment in reform. Secretary Duncan will reserve up to \$350 million of this stimulus funding to help states create assessments aligned to common sets of standards. The remaining \$4 billion will be awarded to states in a national competition.

The U.S. Department of Education has grouped states into five categories based on population, with the more populous states eligible for larger amounts of Race to the Top grants. Pennsylvania is among just seven states eligible for awards of between \$200 million and \$400 million, and it is our expectation that we will apply for the highest amount available to us.

While each of our 500 school districts stands to benefit from resources and tools PDE will make available using Race to the Top grant funding, only **participating** districts will share in Race to the Top funding in exchange for implementing the reforms described below.

In addition, 31 school districts have individual schools that qualify for our proposed turnaround school initiative. These districts will receive an even greater level of Race to the Top funding in exchange for committing to one of four bold school intervention models (as defined in the Race to the Top guidance) in these schools where raising student achievement has been the most challenging. (These districts already have been notified of their eligibility for this level of support and a list of the districts is attached as Addendum 5.)

Districts that choose to participate in Pennsylvania's Race to the Top program will need to formally adopt a memorandum of understanding with PDE. We are asking that this MOU be signed by the superintendent, the local school board president and the local union president. Districts will be asked to provide PDE with a preliminary letter of intent (Addendum 3) to participate by December 18, and then a **formal MOU with a preliminary scope of work must be submitted to PDE by January 13, 2010, in substantially the form attached to this letter.** (Addendum 4 is a model MOU presented in the Race to the Top application and will be adapted for use in Pennsylvania.)

The preliminary scope of work requires only that districts agree to specific areas of reform rather than to specific activities. A detailed scope of work is not required until 90 days after the awarding of Race to the Top funds.

Participating districts will receive substantial benefits as part of their commitment to Race to the Top. Using the assumption that Pennsylvania will receive \$400 million and have 150 participating districts, at least \$200 million would be shared among participating districts, with allocations to participating districts ranging from \$100,000 to millions of dollars based on a district's size and the Title I allocation formula mandated in Race to the Top.



The table below outlines the possible range of funding available to participating school districts.

Potential award to districts if 150 districts participate, and PDE receives a total RTTT award of \$400 million

Title I allocation formula mandated by Race to the Top ^{1,2}

District Title I Part A grant levels (current year only)			
Number of students in district	Basic, Targeted, EFIG, Concentration	Basic, Targeted, EFIG only	Basic only
Greater than 10,000	\$3 million to \$8 million	\$1 million to \$4 million	\$300,000 to \$1 million
5,000 – 10,000	\$1 million to \$3 million	\$500,000 to \$1 million	\$150,000 to \$500,000
2,500 – 5,000	\$500,000 to \$1.5 million	\$200,000 to \$500,000	\$100,000 to \$200,000
Less than 2,500	\$200,000 to \$600,000	\$100,000 to \$300,000	\$100,000 to \$150,000

Turnaround schools will receive an additional \$700 - \$900 per student not included in this table³

¹ Allocations are based on assumptions about the number of participating districts, the potential award amount to Pennsylvania, and the method PDE will use to distribute funds; allocation levels are preliminary and are subject to change

² This table does not apply for Philadelphia and Pittsburgh

³ Turnaround districts that receive school improvement funds are expected to supplement RTTT funding with SI funding to pay for initiatives in turnaround schools

In addition to the funding received through Race to the Top, school districts also will be able to leverage other federal and state funding sources available for the same and/or complementary reform activities targeted in the Race to the Top in order to increase the available funding for these bold reforms. In particular, funds from Pennsylvania’s ARRA Title I School

Improvement allocation will be available only to those districts with turnaround schools that commit to Race to the Top participation. Other funds which can be leveraged to support Race to the Top activities include Pennsylvania’s Accountability Block Grant program and the Education Assistance Program.



The Race to the Top rules call for at least 50 percent of a state’s grant to be passed directly through to LEAs for district- and school-level reforms.

What participating districts will have to do

The Race to Top application guidelines require states to describe the initiatives and reforms that will be implemented at the state level, as well as activities to be implemented by participating districts and participating districts with turnaround schools.

We have arrived at this plan with the benefit of input from many Pennsylvania education leaders, national school reform experts, and a thorough review of the research on what has proven to make a difference in raising student achievement. The plan reflects what many of us who have spent our careers in education know well: there is no singular solution for turning all schools into successful schools or for turning all struggling students into proficient students. This plan reflects our commitment to a comprehensive approach to raising student achievement, and it is a plan we intend to implement with the greatest sense of urgency.

Attached to this document (Addendum 1) you will find an overview of proposed activities for participating districts, outlining what the commonwealth’s role will be, as well as the expectations and requirements of participating districts and any turnaround schools within those districts.

In coordination with the activities described in this attached chart, a participating district with one or more turnaround schools also must agree to select one of the four school intervention models for each of its turnaround schools. These models are defined in the Race to the Top guidelines and include: (1) turnaround; (2) restart; (3) school closure; (4) transformation.

Set forth below is a summary of each school intervention model:

Districts with turnaround schools must select one of four school intervention models for turning around these schools

Overview of the required elements	
Turnaround	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hire a new principal and replace at least 50% of the staff with highly effective teachers Hire a Chief Turnaround Officer to support the principal Implement a multi-measure evaluation system Implement a rigorous, research-based curricula Increase learning time Use student data to inform and differentiate instruction Provide appropriate socio-emotional supports
Transformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Similar to the turnaround model without the requirement of 50% staff turnover Districts must agree to evaluate teachers using a multi-measure evaluation tool; reward school leaders, teachers and staff who have increased student achievement and remove those who have not
Restart	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convert the school or close and reopen the school under a charter school operator, charter management organization (CMO) or an education management organization (EMO) Require the operator to meet most of the requirements under the turnaround model
School Closure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Close the school and send the students to a higher-performing school in the LEA Monitor the performance of affected students

Among the supplemental materials attached to this document (Addendum 2) is a chart detailing the expectations required for schools in the turnaround school initiative.

If Pennsylvania receives a Race to the Top award, participating districts with turnaround schools will have up to 90 days from the date of the award to submit a detailed final scope of work identifying the selection of a specific school intervention model and the plan for implementation in each turnaround

school. This final scope of work would be subject to PDE review and approval. For schools which are ready to begin immediately, implementation of Race to the Top activities may begin in the fall of 2010 or even earlier. For schools that need more time, school year 2010-11 may be used as planning time, with full implementation of Race to the Top activities beginning in summer or fall of 2011. Participating districts with a large number of school turnarounds may defer implementation of some of them until 2012-2013.

Timeline for development and implementation of school intervention plans

	Action item	Date
For schools which intend to begin RTTT reform activities in 2010-11	Submit plan for adopting and implementing one of four school intervention plans for PDE review and approval	90 days after state receipt of award
	PDE reviews plan for alignment with PA's approved RTTT plan	Within 30 days of PDE receipt of final Scope of Work
	Implementation of RTTT activities begins	Summer/fall of 2010
For schools which need additional time to develop plans for schools in the turnaround school initiative	Planning time	School year 2010-11
	Submit plan for adopting and implementing one of four school intervention plans for PDE review and approval	February 2011
	Implementation of RTTT activities begins	Summer/fall 2011
For those districts which have multiple turnaround schools	Implementation of RTTT activities at some schools may be deferred, with implementation of RTTT schools staggered over school years 2010-11, 2011-12 and 2012-13	



Participating districts will receive substantial benefits in exchange for a serious commitment to improving student outcomes.

What you will need to do now

As a superintendent, you will need to immediately begin the conversation with your local stakeholders – including your school board and local teachers’ union – to determine whether your district wants to take part as a participating district in Pennsylvania’s Race to the Top application.

Time is a critical factor in this effort.

We ask that you submit a preliminary letter of intent to PDE no later than Friday, December 18. Additionally, PDE will need a **memorandum of understanding** signed by you, your local school board president and your local union president submitted **no later than January 13, 2010.**

To facilitate this process, you are invited to participate in upcoming PDE-hosted Webinars on the Race to the Top application. (Information on the Webinars can be found at www.pdewebinars.org.)

Here is a timetable of critical actions that must be taken within the next six weeks:

- **December 7, 2009 (Noon-1 p.m.) and December 8, 2009 (9-10 a.m.)** – PDE will host Webinars to aid districts in gauging their level of interest and involvement in Pennsylvania’s Race to the Top application.
- **December 18, 2009** – Superintendents should advise PDE via a letter of intent of a district’s interest in being a “participating district” in the Race to the Top application.
- **January 13, 2010** – Districts must submit a memorandum of understanding to PDE.
- **January 19, 2010** – PDE must submit its Race to the Top application to the U.S. Department of Education.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education cannot overstate the urgency with which you must act in order for your district to take part.

Participating districts also must adhere to a strict timeline to implement reforms, meeting a series of deadlines over the next several months and throughout the next four school years.

District timeline for the RTTT application

	Action item	Date
By December 18, 2009	Draft RTTT plan sent to superintendents	12/4
	Superintendents review the draft plan with local education stakeholders	12/7-12/18
	Submit preliminary letters of intent to PDE	12/18
By January 13, 2010	Final RTTT plan sent to superintendents	1/2
	Superintendents review the draft plan with the school board president and local union president	1/2-1/13
	Submit final Memorandum of Understanding to PDE affirming district participations	1/13
After Race to the Top Award	Develop LEA-level implementation plans for application activities (e.g., school turnaround plan, teacher and principal evaluation tools)	90 days after award
	Get PDE approval for implementation plans and submission of plans to DOE	30 days after PDE receipt of plan

Our critical next steps

Pennsylvania's education community has worked cooperatively and quickly in the past to achieve common goals, but vying for Race to the Top funds will require a level of commitment and urgency beyond any previous efforts. This will be an intensively competitive process.

Local stakeholder support will be crucial to Pennsylvania's Race to the Top application. Our ability to compete for these funds will require communication and cooperation at all levels – teachers, school leaders, district officials, intermediate units and state leaders – to put together the best application possible for the benefit of our students.

Our ability to compete will be dictated by the efforts we make within **just the next few weeks**.

Between now and December 18, every superintendent should initiate a conversation with your local educational community to determine the level of involvement your district wants to have in our statewide effort. This conversation will include reviewing draft plans with your school board president and local union president and submitting your district's preliminary letters of intent to PDE.

Race to the Top presents a unique opportunity for Pennsylvania to accelerate our academic progress, but we must act quickly and cooperatively to put the commonwealth in the best possible position to compete for these funds. The department looks forward to working with all of you to help Pennsylvania put together our strongest application.

Should you have questions about this process – or ideas on ways to engage local education stakeholders in the commonwealth's overall Race to the Top effort – please e-mail ra-pde@state.pa.us or contact one of the following PDE staff based on the intermediate unit in which you belong:

- IUs 1 through 10: Jennifer Cleghorn, (717) 214-5433
- IUs 11 through 20: Beth Olanoff, (717) 783-6828
- IUs 21 through 29: Abby Smith, (717) 525-5988



Addendum 1

Summary of proposed activities (1/3)

Primary Objectives	The State will...	Participating districts will...	Turnaround schools in participating districts must...
SAS and the use of data	<p>Adopt and align Pennsylvania’s existing academic standards and system of assessments with the Common Core standards</p> <p>Provide training on the standards aligned system and associated tools such as the voluntary model curriculum, diagnostic assessments and other SAS tools and resources integrating new standards as needed</p> <p>Develop model systems and tools to support the effective use of real-time data to drive instruction including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a model system of assessments (formative, benchmark, diagnostic, summative) (b) a model Early Warning System to use real-time data to identify at-risk students in grades 6 and above (c) protocols for collaborative planning time for teachers <p>Provide technical assistance in backward mapping curricula</p> <p>Create a model school information system (SIS) for use at the local level that provides real-time student data and communicates with the State Longitudinal Data System (PIMS)</p>	<p>Implement a high quality curriculum that is aligned with standards, assessments, curriculum framework, instruction, materials and interventions</p> <p>Implement a system of assessments with capacity to inform instruction on timely and regular basis</p> <p>Implement a system to use real-time student data to identify students at academic risk in grade 6 and above.</p> <p>Implement a SIS that provides real-time student data and can communicate with PIMS</p> <p>Provide collaborative time for teachers to review real-time student data to drive instruction</p>	<p>Implement a rigorous research-based curriculum aligned with standards, assessments, curriculum framework, instruction, materials and interventions</p> <p>Implement the model system of assessments</p> <p>Backward map district math and literacy curricula to ensure coherence from grade level to grade level</p> <p>Implement the model Early Warning System for grades 6 and above that uses real-time student level data</p> <p>Implement the model SIS or complete a diagnostic of district data system capabilities</p> <p>Provide at least twice weekly collaborative time for teachers to review real-time student data to drive instruction</p>
Human capital pipeline	<p>Use student achievement data to evaluate and improve teacher and principal preparation programs</p> <p>Establish partnerships with colleges, universities and nonprofit organizations to create post-baccalaureate certification programs to attract career changers and young professionals in teacher shortage areas (STEM, ESL, special education)</p> <p>Develop additional alternative certification routes in high need fields and hard to staff schools in partnership with LEAs</p> <p>Develop urban principal and teacher academies in partnership with school districts to address the critical shortage of highly effective urban school principals and teachers</p> <p>Partner with colleges and universities to attract and subsidize college tuition for high-performing high school students committed to teaching in high-need districts</p>	<p>Develop a human capital plan to identify strategies based on district needs to attract and retain effective teachers, limit teacher vacancies, staff hard-to-staff subjects, and address the equitable distribution of highly effective teachers</p> <p>Provide signing and retention bonuses for effective teachers and principals in hard-to-staff schools and subject areas (optional activity)</p>	<p>Develop a human capital plan identifying strategies based on district needs to attract and retain effective teachers, limit teacher vacancies, staff hard-to-staff subjects, and address the equitable distribution of highly effective teachers</p> <p>Provide signing and retention bonuses for effective teachers and principals in hard-to-staff schools and subject areas (optional activity)</p> <p>Provide new teacher induction that includes side-by-side mentoring by highly effective teachers</p>

Addendum 1 – continued

Summary of proposed activities (2/3)

Primary Objectives	The State will...	Participating districts will...	Turnaround schools in participating districts must...
Multi-measure evaluation	<p>Develop model multi-measure evaluation system for teachers and principals that takes into account data on student growth as a significant factor</p> <p>Develop required training for principals in effective use of evaluation systems including observation and due process as related to teacher evaluation</p>	<p>Implement a multi-measure evaluation system for teachers and principals that takes into account data on student growth as a significant factor and is designed and developed with teacher and principal involvement</p> <p>Conduct annual evaluations of teachers and principals that include timely and constructive feedback and provide data on student growth for students, classes and schools</p> <p>Provide training to all principals and teachers on effective use of the evaluation system</p> <p>Use evaluations to inform decisions regarding professional development, compensation, promotion and retention, tenure and removal of ineffective teachers after ample opportunity to improve</p>	<p>Implement model multi-measure teacher and principal evaluation system that takes into account data on student growth as a significant factor</p> <p>Conduct annual evaluations of teachers and principals that include timely and constructive feedback and provide data on student growth for students, classes and schools</p> <p>Provide training to all principals and teachers on the effective use of the evaluation system</p> <p>Use evaluations to inform decisions regarding professional development, compensation, promotion and retention, tenure and removal of ineffective teachers after ample opportunity to improve</p>
Professional development	<p>Develop a model career ladder for promotion, compensation and advancement of teachers based on responsibility and other factors including student growth</p> <p>Change the approval process for ACT 48 professional development to require alignment with standards for teacher effectiveness in order for teachers to retain their PA Teaching Certificates</p> <p>Evaluate effectiveness of professional development programs based on student growth</p> <p>Develop professional development for teachers in providing high rigor coursework in high school (e.g. Advanced Placement, IB, dual enrollment)</p>	<p>Adopt a career ladder for promotion, compensation and advancement of teachers based on responsibility and other factors including student growth (optional activity)</p> <p>Provide professional development to teachers based on the needs evidenced by teacher evaluation results</p> <p>Provide PD to all district instructional staff on effective instructional practices including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The use of data including diagnostic and formative assessment tools to differentiate classroom instruction – SAS tools and resources – Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTII) – Systems to identify students at risk – Development of Individual Learning Plans 	<p>Adopt the model career ladder for promotion, compensation and advancement of teachers based on responsibility and other factors including student growth</p> <p>Provide professional development to all district instructional staff on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the use of data including diagnostic and formative assessment tools to differentiate classroom instruction – SAS tools and resources – Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTII) – Early Warning System – Development of Individual Learning Plans <p>Provide professional development to high school teachers in providing high rigor coursework (e.g. AP, IB or dual enrollment)</p>

Addendum 1 – continued

Summary of proposed activities (3/3)

Primary Objectives	The State will...	Participating districts will...	Turnaround schools in participating districts must...
School turnarounds	<p>Identify schools with the greatest challenges in raising student achievement eligible for RTTT turnaround support</p> <p>Develop an Office of School Turnarounds with the Dept of Education charged with providing technical assistance to turnaround schools and their districts</p>		<p>Agree to develop and implement one of four school intervention models for each turnaround school identified by state and implement detailed reform activities</p> <p>In districts with more than 3 turnaround schools, identify a district turnaround leader who reports to the superintendent</p> <p>Build high quality early childhood programs in partnership with local early childhood providers</p>
Evaluation and best-practices	<p>Develop State capacity to identify best-practices across the Race to the Top reform areas (e.g. Innovation Labs)</p> <p>Conduct research and evaluation of RTTT programs and policies</p>	<p>Provide data and access to PDE to evaluate and study RTTT strategies and activities</p> <p>Review available research and evaluations when developing school reform plans and work with PDE and the State's technical assistance network to implement best-practices</p>	<p>Provide data and access to PDE to evaluate and study RTTT strategies and activities</p> <p>Review available research and evaluations when developing school plans and work with PDE and the State's technical assistance network to implement best-practices</p>

Addendum 2

Requirements for schools in the turnaround school initiative (1/3)

X = required O = optional

	Turnaround	Restart	Transformation
Hiring, developing and retaining great principals and turnaround leadership			
Replace principals that have been at the school longer than three years	X		X
Provide principals with flexibility in hiring and retaining staff, scheduling and budget	X	X	X
Require all turnaround principals to take the Teaching Matters course	X		X
Implement all relevant reforms required of participating districts including multi-measure principal evaluation systems and training for principals in effective teacher evaluations, observations and due process	X	X	X
Hire a Chief Turnaround Officer for each school, reporting directly to the school principal, and, in districts with more than 3 turnaround schools, identify a Director of District Turnarounds to report directly to the superintendent	X		X
Provide signing bonuses to attract highly effective principals (back-loaded over a four year commitment)	O		O
Hiring, developing and retaining great teachers			
Replace the staff, rehiring no more than 50 percent	X		
Develop a plan for hiring and retaining effective teachers	X	X	X
Ensure new teacher induction includes side-by-side mentoring	X		X
Implement all relevant reforms required of participating districts including a multi-measure evaluation system and PD in data use	X	X	X
Identify and reward school leaders and teachers who have increased student achievement and graduation rates and identify and remove those who have not	X		X
Provide signing bonuses to effective teachers (back-loaded over a 4 year commitment)	O		O
Provide a bonus to recruit and place a cohort of high performing teachers together in a turnaround school	O		O
Adopt the model career ladder for promotion, compensation and advancement of teachers based on responsibility and other factors including student growth	X		X
Provide a 7 to 10 day summer academy for teachers in the summer before the turnaround opens with intense, targeted professional development in core instruction, RTII, student data analysis and individual learning plans	X		X

Addendum 2 – continued

Requirements for schools in the turnaround school initiative (2/3)			
X = required O = optional			
	Turnaround	Restart	Transformation
Implement a rigorous research-based curriculum aligned with standards, assessments, curriculum framework, instruction, materials and interventions			
Backward map district math and literacy curricula to ensure coherence of transitions from grade level to grade level	X	X	X
Implement a State-approved instructional model or other model that has been identified as effective by What Works Clearinghouse or the Best Evidence Encyclopedia (e.g. America's Choice, Talent Development)	X	X	X
Implement PDE's RTII program to address learning gaps	X	X	X
Implement the Adolescent Literacy Academy model based on TALA in middle school and high school as necessary	O		O
Implement Reading Recovery for all students falling behind in grades 1 through 3	X		X
Increase the number of advanced high rigor courses in turnaround high schools	X	X	X
Use student data to inform and differentiate instruction			
Implement the model Early Warning System and train staff in system use	X	X	X
Implement all relevant reforms required of participating districts including providing professional development in the use of data and integration of model system of assessments (e.g. 4Sight, CDDRE, eMetric, diagnostic assessments) and other SAS tools	X	X	X
Provide increased learning time			
Provide collaborative time at least twice weekly for teachers to review real-time student data to drive instruction	X	X	X
All entering 9th grade students attend a preparatory summer academy to build basic skills (modeled on Project Grad or GEAR UP)	X	X	X
Increase learning time by implementing one of the following: – Extending the school day by at least 30 minutes of learning time – Extending the school year by at least 15 days of learning time – Extending the school year for teachers for professional development or for developing/sharing Individual Learning Plans	X	X	X

Addendum 2 – continued

Requirements for schools in the turnaround school initiative (3/3)

X = required O = optional

	Turnaround	Restart	Transformation
Provide appropriate social-emotional and community-oriented services and supports for students			
Build high quality early childhood programs in partnership with local early childhood providers	X	X	X
Develop a plan for providing the appropriate social-emotional supports to all students	X	X	X
Ensure that Early Warning System is used to identify at-risk students in grades 6 and above who need social-emotional or community-oriented services	X	X	X
In turnaround high schools, create a Freshman Academy that includes the following: – Small teams of teachers who all teach the same students and have collaborative planning time together every day – Multiple opportunities for students to earn credits toward graduation (e.g. double dosing, summer school, afterschool, twilight school)	X		X
Develop Individualized Learning Plans for all students, which are updated 3 times a year	O	O	O
Provide a 3-day orientation to all students who transfer into the school midyear including an opportunity to meet relevant adults in the school, a diagnostic assessment, creation of an ILP and onboarding to the local data system	X	X	X
Develop a system to transfer comprehensive student information at school transitions (elementary to middle; middle to high) and for new students	X	X	X

Addendum 3

Race to the Top Preliminary Letter of Intent from district to PDE

Please send on or before December 18, 2009

[school district letterhead]

Gerald Zahorchak, Ed.D.
Secretary, Department of Education
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

Dear Dr. Zahorchak:

I am writing to advise you that _____ School District intends to join in the application of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for the Race to the Top competitive grant as a

(Please check appropriate box):

- Participating District; OR
- Participating District with turnaround school(s). Note: Participating Districts with turnaround schools are limited to those districts with turnaround school(s) identified by the department.

Sincerely,

Superintendent

[Name of school district]

Note: This letter of intent may be sent by e-mail to ra-educationsecretary@state.pa.us or by fax to 717-787-7222.

Addendum 4

Model Participating LEA Memorandum of Understanding

This Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) is entered into by and between _____ (“State”) and _____ (“Participating LEA”). The purpose of this agreement is to establish a framework of collaboration, as well as articulate specific roles and responsibilities in support of the State in its implementation of an approved Race to the Top grant project.

I. SCOPE OF WORK

Exhibit I, the Preliminary Scope of Work, indicates which portions of the State’s proposed reform plans (“State Plan”) the Participating LEA is agreeing to implement. (Note that, in order to participate, the LEA must agree to implement all or significant portions of the State Plan.)

II. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

A. PARTICIPATING LEA RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the State in implementing the tasks and activities described in the State’s Race to the Top application, the Participating LEA subgrantee will:

- 1) Implement the LEA plan as identified in Exhibits I and II of this agreement;
- 2) Actively participate in all relevant convenings, communities of practice, or other practice-sharing events that are organized or sponsored by the State or by the U.S. Department of Education (“ED”);
- 3) Post to any website specified by the State or ED, in a timely manner, all non-proprietary products and lessons learned developed using funds associated with the Race to the Top grant;
- 4) Participate, as requested, in any evaluations of this grant conducted by the State or ED;
- 5) Be responsive to State or ED requests for information including on the status of the project, project implementation, outcomes, and any problems anticipated or encountered;
- 6) Participate in meetings and telephone conferences with the State to discuss (a) progress of the project, (b) potential dissemination of resulting non-proprietary products and lessons learned, (c) plans for subsequent years of the Race to the Top grant period, and (d) other matters related to the Race to the Top grant and associated plans.

B. STATE RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting Participating LEAs in implementing their tasks and activities described in the State’s Race to the Top application, the State grantee will:

- 1) Work collaboratively with, and support the Participating LEA in carrying out the LEA Plan as identified in Exhibits I and II of this agreement;
- 2) Timely distribute the LEA’s portion of Race to the Top grant funds during the course of the project period and in accordance with the LEA Plan identified in Exhibit II;
- 3) Provide feedback on the LEA’s status updates, annual reports, any interim reports, and project plans and products; and
- 4) Identify sources of technical assistance for the project.

Addendum 4 – *continued*

Model Participating LEA Memorandum of Understanding - *continued*

C. JOINT RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1) The State and the Participating LEA will each appoint a key contact person for the Race to the Top grant.
- 2) These key contacts from the State and the Participating LEA will maintain frequent communication to facilitate cooperation under this MOU.
- 3) State and Participating LEA grant personnel will work together to determine appropriate timelines for project updates and status reports throughout the whole grant period.
- 4) State and Participating LEA grant personnel will negotiate in good faith to continue to achieve the overall goals of the State's Race to the Top grant, even when the State Plan requires modifications that affect the Participating LEA, or when the LEA Plan requires modifications.

D. STATE RECOURSE FOR LEA NON-PERFORMANCE

If the State determines that the LEA is not meeting its goals, timelines, budget, or annual targets or is not fulfilling other applicable requirements, the State grantee will take appropriate enforcement action, which could include a collaborative process between the State and the LEA, or any of the enforcement measures that are detailed in 34 CFR section 80.43 including putting the LEA on reimbursement payment status, temporarily withholding funds, or disallowing costs.

III. ASSURANCES

The Participating LEA hereby certifies and represents that it:

- 1) Has all requisite power and authority to execute this MOU;
- 2) Is familiar with the State's Race to the Top grant application and is supportive of and committed to working on all or significant portions of the State Plan;
- 3) Agrees to be a Participating LEA and will implement those portions of the State Plan indicated in Exhibit I, if the State application is funded,
- 4) Will provide a Final Scope of Work to be attached to this MOU as Exhibit II only if the State's application is funded; will do so in a timely fashion but no later than 90 days after a grant is awarded; and will describe in Exhibit II the LEA's specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, key personnel, and annual targets for key performance measures ("LEA Plan ") in a manner that is consistent with the Preliminary Scope of Work (Exhibit I) and with the State Plan; and
- 5) Will comply with all of the terms of the Grant, the State's subgrant, and all applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including laws and regulations applicable to the Program, and the applicable provisions of EDGAR (34 CFR Parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 82, 84, 85, 86, 97, 98 and 99).

IV. MODIFICATIONS

This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended only by written agreement signed by each of the parties involved, and in consultation with ED.

V. DURATION/TERMINATION

This Memorandum of Understanding shall be effective, beginning with the date of the last signature hereon and, if a grant is received, ending upon the expiration of the grant project period, or upon mutual agreement of the parties, whichever occurs first.

Addendum 4 – continued

Model Participating LEA Memorandum of Understanding - continued

VI. SIGNATURES

LEA Superintendent (or equivalent authorized signatory) – required:

Signature/Date

Print Name/Title

President of Local School Board (or equivalent, if applicable):

Signature/Date

Print Name/Title

Local Teachers' Union Leader (if applicable):

Signature/Date

Print Name/Title

Authorized State Official – required:

By its signature below, the State hereby accepts the LEA as a Participating LEA.

Signature/Date

Print Name/Title

Addendum 5

Districts with schools eligible for the turnaround school initiative

ALIQUIPPA SD

ALLENTOWN CITY SD

CENTRAL DAUPHIN SD

CHAMBERSBURG AREA SD

CHESTER-UPLAND SD

CLAIRTON CITY SD

CONNELLSVILLE AREA SD

CORNELL SD

CORRY AREA SD

CRAWFORD CENTRAL SD

DUQUESNE CITY SD

ERIE CITY SD

EVERETT AREA SD

FARRELL AREA SD

HARMONY AREA SD

HARRISBURG CITY SD

HAZLETON AREA SD

LANCASTER SD

LEBANON SD

MCKEESPORT AREA SD

NORRISTOWN SD

PHILADELPHIA CITY SD

PITTSBURGH SD

READING SD

SOUTHEAST DELCO SD

TURKEYFOOT VALLEY AREA SD

UNIONTOWN AREA SD

UPPER DARBY SD

WEST GREENE SD

WILLIAM PENN SD

YORK CITY SD